

send the right message to tribal governments that we see you the way you are.

You are a sovereign government entitled to make the decisions that you need to make to the benefit of your citizens without undue and irrational interference from the IRS.

I think the bipartisan nature of this bill is a tribute to my friend from Kansas who understands completely what we are attempting to do. It is one of those rare moments that I have had since I have been in the Senate, where you see a good bill being debated—a good bill being discussed—and then having an opportunity to actually do the right thing. I thank my friend from Kansas for the opportunity to join with him as a cosponsor of this legislation.

It is critically important that this message get sent and that we have an opportunity in the future to continue to work with tribal governments to act in the best interests of tribal citizens and provide the services that are essential for a growing population of Native American citizens but also of a population that lives in a great deal of poverty.

I thank my friend from Kansas. I look forward to seeing this bill signed into law—which I think will happen. I think that the stars are aligning. It will be a great day and a very important step in securing a better relationship of all governments with the Native American people.

I yield the floor. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

Ms. HEITKAMP. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

OBSERVING THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, tomorrow we will mark Constitution Day—a day set aside to reflect on our Nation's charter and how it has shaped what it means to be American. On September 17, 1787, George Washington, James Madison, and their fellow Framers made the momentous decision to sign the Constitution and send it along to the American people for ratification marking a new beginning in our Nation's profound experiment in democracy.

As important as the original charter continues to be, the Founders did not

design it to be immutable. One of its most notable features is article 5, which established the process for improvement in the form of constitutional amendments. This key provision rooted in both intellectual humility and constitutional faith—ensured that our Nation's constitutional journey would not conclude in Philadelphia in 1787. Instead, it would continue to unfold in the decades and centuries that followed, tasking each generation of Americans with improving the charter in order to build “a more perfect Union.”

Since the ratification of the Bill of Rights in 1791, our Constitution has been amended 17 times. These changes have helped to make the Constitution the revered document it is today. As I have noted on previous Constitution Days, Americans must celebrate not just the original Constitution of Washington, Madison, and the founding generation, but the whole Constitution, including its 27 amendments. This is all the more important as we approach a key set of anniversaries—the 150th anniversaries of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments, which many scholars have rightly described as our nation's “Second Founding.”

Ratified by President Lincoln and his generation after the Civil War, these Second Founding amendments transformed our original charter—ending slavery, banning racial discrimination in voting, and elevating liberty and equality to a central place in our constitutional order. Perhaps most importantly, these amendments gave Congress the authority it needed to protect the civil rights of all Americans—authority that we have used to pass landmark civil rights laws such as the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Before our Nation marked the original Constitution's bicentennial in 1987, Congress established a commission led by Chief Justice Burger to organize a national celebration. Americans from across the political spectrum came together in a spirit of unity and pride to honor the founding generation's profound achievements. With the 150th anniversary of the second founding, President Lincoln and his generation deserve the same.

It is deeply saddening to me that the anniversary of the 13th, 14th, and 15th Amendments coincides not with such a celebration, however, but with what can be called nothing short of an attack on the principles of equality and liberty they protect. The Supreme Court's decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* and the wave of recent State laws undermining the right to vote demonstrate a dangerous erosion of these monumental Amendments that provide us the tools we need to build a fairer, freer, and more equal society.

Tomorrow, as we celebrate the signing of our Constitution 227 years ago, I hope we also reflect on the unfinished work ahead that is necessary to live up to the core principles enshrined in our Nation's charter—including those of the second founding. The racial tensions exposed by the police shooting of

Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO are not new, but they should serve as a clear reminder that our work is not done. I am heartened by the national dialogue that has been sparked by that young man's tragic death, and it is my sincere hope that we can harness that energy, directing it not toward greater distrust and divide but toward meeting the challenge to build “a more perfect Union” left to us by our Founders.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAKE MEAD NATIONAL RECREATION AREA

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the 50th anniversary of the Lake Mead National Recreation Area.

In the early 1900s, the populations of Nevada, southern California, and Arizona were beginning to grow. New communities were in need of water for irrigation, electrical power, and a way to control the seasonal flooding of the mighty Colorado River. On December 21, 1928, President Calvin Coolidge signed the Boulder Canyon Project Act, which authorized funds for three dam projects along the Lower Colorado River, the largest of which became the Hoover Dam, and this monumental dam created our Nation's largest reservoir, Lake Mead.

On October 8, 1964, 18 years after the completion of the Hoover Dam, the Lake Mead national recreation area was established, making it the first National Recreation Area in the country. Since its founding, Lake Mead has become essential to Southern Nevada. The reservoir supplies local communities with drinking water, provides low-cost electricity throughout the Southwest, and is a beacon for outdoor recreation, which attracts millions of dollars annually to local and regional economies. In 2013, the Lake Mead National Recreation Area visitors contributed \$260 million to communities surrounding the lake, and this helped support approximately 3,000 jobs in the area.

Today, Lake Mead is one of the most popular destinations in America, with more than 6 million visitors every year. Lake Mead boasts more than 900 plant and 500 animal species, 24 of which are threatened or endangered. Within the national recreation area, there are 9 wilderness areas that help support the rehabilitation of these important species and over 1,300 recorded archeological sites that tell the story of the region's rich cultural heritage. In addition to the area's many hiking trails, Lake Mead also has several boat marinas and the Black Canyon Water Trail, which was recently dedicated as Nevada's first National Water Trail by the Secretary of the Interior.

I recognize Guy Edwards, Robert Rose, Ben Thompson, George Baggle, Charles Richey, Roger Allin, Glen Bean, William Briggles, Gary Bunney,